

Remarks

Reconsideration of the subject application is requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

The search performed by the examiner in the course of substantively examining the claims is appreciated.

The amendments to the specification are to correct readily discernible grammatical errors (pages 5, 7, and 11) and typographical errors (page 5), and for consistency of terms (pages 6 and 7). No new matter is submitted.

A Terminal Disclaimer is enclosed herewith to address the issue raised in paragraphs 2 and 3 of the Office action.

Claims 4-20 are the subject of the Office action. In this paper, claims 4-20 are canceled without prejudice and replaced with new claims 21-36, of which claim 21 is independent and claims 22-36 are dependent claims.

Support for the new claims is as follows:

Claim 21: This claim is a combination of claim 4 and respective portions of claims 12, 17, and 18.

Claim 22: See claims 4 and 5.

Claim 23: See claims 4 and 6.

Claim 24: See claim 7.

Claim 25: See claim 8.

Claim 26: See claim 9 and FIG. 3 (reel 104).

Claim 27: See claim 10 and FIG. 3 (drive-wheel assembly 108).

Claim 28: See claim 11.

Claim 29: See claim 12.

Claim 30: See claim 12 and FIG. 3 (push wheels 110, 114, pinch-wheel assembly 130, pinch roller 134).

Claim 31: See claim 13 and FIG. 3 (friction force fpB).

Claim 32: See claim 14.

Claim 33: See claim 15.

Claim 34: See claim 16.

Claim 35: See claim 19.

Claim 36: See claim 20.

The issue raised in paragraph 5 of the Office action is moot in view of the cancellation of claims 4-20.

In paragraph 7 of the Office action, claims 4, 7-10, and 17-20 stand rejected for alleged anticipation (35 U.S.C. §102(e)) by VanNortwick et al. This rejection is now moot. In addition, since new claim 21 effectively combines features previously recited in claims 4, 12, 17, and 18, claim 21 and its dependents cannot be anticipated by VanNortwick et al.

In paragraph 9 of the Office action, claims 5 and 6 stand rejected for alleged anticipation (35 U.S.C. §102(e)) by or alleged obviousness from VanNortwick et al. This rejection is now moot. In addition, new claims 22 and 23 (corresponding generally to claims 5 and 6, respectively), because they depend from new claim 21, cannot be anticipated by or obvious from this reference.

In paragraph 10 of the Office action, claims 12-13 stand rejected for alleged obviousness from VanNortwick et al. in view of Saito. This rejection is now moot. With respect to new claim 21 (which incorporates features previously recited in claims 4 and 12 as well as 17 and 18), it is pointed out that, as acknowledged in the Office action, VanNortwick et al. does not disclose a coverlay film for the tape. The reason for this omission is that the apparatus of VanNortwick et al. is specifically configured to utilize a tape on which the adhesive is heat-activated. (Col. 5, lines 4-6). Heat-activated adhesive on a tape does not require a coverlay, and hence the VanNortwick apparatus includes no mechanism for removing or otherwise handling a coverlay. In addition, VanNortwick et al. provides not even a suggestion of a coverlay or of any mechanism for removing or otherwise handling a coverlay, and hence provides no motivation to the skilled person to seek out any information on how to remove or otherwise handle a coverlay. Hence, the skilled person armed with VanNortwick et al. would have no motivation to combine Saito with VanNortwick et al. to derive new claim 21. Furthermore, any conceivable combination of VanNortwick et al. and Saito still does not provide the skilled person with a teaching or suggestion of the entire combination of features now recited in new claim 21. Therefore, new claim 21 and all claims depending therefrom are properly allowable over

VanNortwick et al. and Saito and over any combination of these references with Wroblewski, for example.

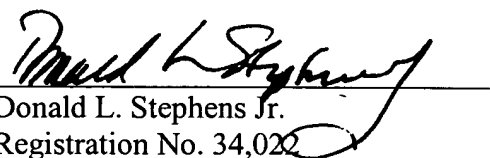
In view of the allowability of claims discussed in the previous paragraph, the rejections set forth in paragraph 11 of the Office action are moot.

All of new claims 21-36 are properly allowable, and early action to such end is respectfully requested.

The undersigned has reviewed the Interview Summary, dated April 8, 2005, provided by the Examiner, and the undersigned concurs generally with the Examiner's statement of the substance of the subject telephonic interview that was held on April 5, 2005. The only correction that would be made to the Interview Summary is the spelling of the undersigned's name as referred in said Summary. It is presumed that the Examiner will provide the undersigned with a copy of the Form 892, listing U.S. Patent No. 6,543,610, in the next communication from the PTO.

Respectfully submitted,

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